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ABSTRACT

This report results from a National School Boards Association (NSBA) conference on declining enrollment and from a survey of state school boards associations conducted in advance of the conference. The conference drew school board leaders and school administrators together with population experts to achieve several purposes that are reflected in the chapters of this report: to share their understanding of declining enrollment; to provide state school boards associations with suggestions of how they might help local districts; to provide NSBA with suggestions of how it might help state associations and local districts; and to raise issues and questions that the National Institute of Education (NIE) should consider as it shapes its agenda for dealing with enrollment change. (Author/MLF)

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National School Boards Association
CONFERENCE REPORT

DECLINING ENROLLMENT

An NSBA Conference* - August 4-6, 1976

Colorado Springs, Colorado

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EA 010 301

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Introduction

This report identifies more problems about declining enrollment than answers.

The report results from a 1976 NSBA conference on declining enrollment supported by the National Institute of Education, and from a survey of state school boards associations conducted in advance of that conference. The conference drew school board leaders and school administrators together with population experts to achieve several purposes, which are reflected in the chapters of this report: to share their understanding of declining enrollment (Chapters I to III); to provide state school boards associations with suggestions of how they might help local districts (Chapter IV, Part 1); to provide NSBA with suggestions of how it might help state associations and local districts (Chapter IV, Part 2); and to raise issues and questions that the National Institute of Education should consider as it shapes its agenda for dealing with enrollment change (Chapter V).

The conference did each of these in some measure, and the report distills the observations raised while also summarizing the input which conferees found provocative. While conference participants and NSBA staff hoped that the conference would yield clearcut recipes and certain priorities, it did not; both the conference and the survey suggest, rather that school boards (as others) find declining enrollment to be a confusing and perplexing phenomenon.

There is, however, one major observation on which there was emphatic consensus and which speaks to NIE as well as NSBA and state associations:

There is a tendency to view declining enrollment as a state or national phenomenon. For school districts, it is not. Enrollment is a local phenomenon, in each district a unique configuration of birth rate, population migration, age of community, economic growth in a community, and other factors. Aggregate statistics and population trend data may provide some perspective, but they offer little help to a school district's planning efforts. In order to plan for a school district, a board and its administrators must know the demographic, economic, political and social data that predict school district enrollment, and must know how to use these data. In most instances, the data are not available; and in many instances, people do not know how to use them. Therefore, if state and national agencies wish to help local districts, they must find ways to help districts deal with local enrollment. For NIE, especially, this means that national data must be broken down or supplemented to accomodate local district needs.

The NSBA Conference

Conference participants included staff members from state school boards associations in each of the five NSBA regions, school board members or staff from three districts located south, east and west as well as being small, medium and large districts. Experts participating in the conference included Ivan D. Wagner, Director of the Division of Planning and Evaluation, Indiana Department of Public Instruction, Samuel Sniderman, Superintendent of the Oak Park Michigan Schools, and William Graybeal, Research Specialist at the National Education Association and a long-time student of the implications of population changes upon public schools. (See Conference Roster, Appendix I.)

Participants reviewed several publications about aspects of declining enrollment in advance of the meeting, including the NSBA Research Report, Declining Enrollment, No. 1976-1. A survey of state school board associations' knowledge and experience with declining enrollment was reported to the conference.

The conference convened in Colorado Springs, Colorado, August 4-6, 1976. The date and location were selected because another meeting, sponsored by the NSBA School Board Academy, had in attendance 50 board members and administrators from across the country. During one portion of the agenda of that meeting, participants in the declining enrollment conference held small group discussions with these 50 people.

I. The Demographic Context of School Enrollment

While state and national population/enrollment trends are not specific enough for local problem solving and program planning, they do forecast pending enrollment concerns. Such information can be used by school districts and state associations to develop an index of indicators useful in making local projections.

National Population Trends

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (Simon and Frankel, 1976) school enrollment (K-12) went up slightly (4%) from 1964 to 1974; however, enrollment in the nation's schools will decrease about 10 percent from 1974 to 1984. The following table provides some of the population trends which are indicated in NCES's Projections of Education Statistics to 1984-85 (Simon and Frankel, 1976).*

Table 1

Adopted from: "Summary of Trends in Education" (Projections... p.8)

Enrollment	Fall 1964 Thousands	Fall 1975 Thousands	1964 to 1974 % change
K-12	47,716	49,756	4
K-8	35,025	34,419	-2
9-12	12,691	15,337	21

Enrollment	1984 Proj. Thousands	1974 to 1984 % change
K-12	44,900	-10
K-8	31,500	- 8
9-12	13,300	-13

*These other figures cited from Projections...are based on Series II population projections of the United States Bureau of Census. Series II is based on a cohort fertility rate of 2.1 births per woman, which is replacement level. The Bureau uses three Series to make projections (Series I is based on 2.7 births per woman and Series III is based on 1.7 births per woman). Series II is closest to the most recent birth rate expectations.

School Age Population	Fall 1964 Thousands	Fall 1975 Thousands	1964 to 1974 % change
5-13	35,373	33,903	-4
14-17	14,229	16,880	19

School Age Population	1984 Proj. Thousands	1974 to 1984 % change
5-13	30,213	-11
14-17	14,279	-15

These summary figures mask more specific trends in public enrollment. According to NCES (Simon and Frankel, 1976 p. 18) public school enrollment peaked in 1971 with 46.1 million students (K-12). Total (K-12) enrollment is expected to decline until 1982 with 40 million students. Elementary school (K-8) enrollment hit a high point in 1970 (32.6 million) and will continue to decline until 1981 (est. 27.8 million) while high school (9-12) enrollment will peak nationwide this year (1976) with 14.4 million and will not bottom out until the mid 1980's (1983 and 1984 are both projected at 12.1 million). State by state impact is revealed by Table II.

According to NCES, the 5-13 year old aggregate population peaked in 1968 (36.8 million) and will not be expected to increase again until 1983 (with a 1982 low of 29.98 million). For children entering school in kindergarten or first grade there has been a slight increase in 1974 and 1975; however, school starting population will decrease again this year and until 1979 for kindergarten and until 1981 for first graders, based on projections of five and six year olds. High schools will experience declines from 1977 until sometime after 1983.

Beyond 1982, public school enrollments will continue to grow as the children born in the latter half of the 1970s enter school. The trends indicate that the "baby bust" was a temporary phenomenon. Although the women of the post-war baby boom did not have children (or at least not in the expected numbers) in their early child bearing years, there are indications that they may yet have children at about the replacement level of the population (2.1 births). It will be some time after the mid-1980s (beyond the current projections) before enrollments reach their 1969 elementary school peak for all schools and 1971 peak for public elementary schools.

TABLE 2

INCREASING ENROLLMENTS OF STATE SCHOOL SYSTEMS
1970 to 1975

	In Thousands	% Increase Since 1970
Alaska	6	7.5
Arizona	43	9.8
Colorado	13	2.4
Florida	116	8.1
Idaho	4	2.2
Maine	3	1.2
Massachusetts	32	2.7
Nevada	8	6.3
New Hampshire	12	7.5
Vermont	1	1.0
Virginia	5	.5
W. Virginia	1	.3

DECLINING ENROLLMENTS OF STATE SCHOOL SYSTEMS
1970 to 1975

	In Thousands	% Decline From 1970 Enrollments
Alabama	48	6.0
Arkansas	12	2.7
California	239	5.2
Connecticut	7	1.1
Delaware	4	3.0
Georgia	27	2.5
Hawaii	6	3.3
Illinois	79	3.4
Indiana	55	4.5
Iowa	44	6.6
Kansas	66	12.9
Kentucky	22	3.1
Louisiana	9	1.1
Maryland	29	3.2
Michigan	60	2.8
Minnesota	37	4.0
Mississippi	25	4.7
Missouri	46	4.4
Montana	6	3.4
Nebraska	13	4.0
New Jersey	24	1.6
New Mexico	1	.4
New York	66	1.9
North Carolina	23	1.9
North Dakota	15	10.2
Ohio	112	4.6
Oklahoma	36	5.7
Oregon	7	1.5
Pennsylvania	97	4.1
Rhode Island	11	5.9
South Carolina	16	2.5
South Dakota	13	7.8
Tennessee	35	3.9
Texas	78	2.7
Washington	39	4.7
Wisconsin	26	2.6
Wyoming	2	2.3

Source: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Factors Affecting Local Enrollment

Enrollment trends are affected by a variety of factors in addition to population age cohorts. The value of NCES projections is that they show national movements and changes. They do not, however, account for migration between states and localities which may have much more significance for public school program planning. Additionally, national population projections could change if there are shifts in (1) the "fertility norms" or desired family size, (2) the use of contraception, or (3) the degree of rational child bearing choices among women (Morrison, 1976). The national norm is converging on the two-child family; however, annual birth rates may fluctuate in the forseeable future. More women are entering the labor market (specifically, professional fields) or extending their formal education. For some women, child-bearing is being delayed or put off indefinitely as more alternatives are opened to women of child-bearing age. These generalizations are based on current patterns and are subject to change. Significant shifts in social forces could bring about differences in attitudes, choices, the use of contraception and/or abortion as forms of birth control, etc. These uncertainties indicate a need to review population patterns on a continuous basis.

Migration is perhaps more of a pivotal force in determining local school enrollment patterns than birth rates. According to Morrison (1976), Davis and Lewis (1976), and William Graybeal*, general migration patterns provide useful indicators for making enrollment projections at the local level. However, such trends must be carefully interpreted because there is considerable diversity within any Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) which reports population declines. Given this caveat, some generalizations can be expressed:

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*William Graybeal, Research Specialist for the National Education Association, presented data on population trends to Conference participants.

- central cities will continue to experience enrollment declines with increasing percentages of low-income and non white populations in the larger cities.
- first ring suburbs will experience enrollment decline as their populations become more mature, land prices rise, and children grow beyond school age.
- the largest increases in population will be in independent smaller cities away from metropolitan development (beyond commuting distance from central cities).
- there will be a continued pattern of out-migration in urban SMSAs and in-migration to smaller cities and towns.
- as business and industry move away from urban areas, decentralization of employment will act as a force to continue the above trends.
- migration patterns will be uneven as communities deal with growth in different ways (ranging from exploitation/encouragement to attempts to limit or preclude growth).

These changes in migration patterns highlight the need to generate and analyze local area migration and population trends. William Graybeal suggests that birth rates, mobility rates, the available number of births in states, and economic factors affecting migration should be continuously updated. The United States Office of Education is presently attempting to break down census data by school districts. This is important because in many areas school district boundaries do not coincide with municipality borders. Graybeal suggests that states and school districts cooperate to disseminate census information on a monthly basis. Clearinghouse or data bank arrangements can be used because published data is often out of date.

Graybeal also points out the significance of regional population/migration trends. A good deal has been written recently about the growth of the "sun belt" states. The South and West are growing in population. The Northeast is declining, and the North Central states are showing signs of leveling off.

In addition to the migration patterns, these regional trends are supported by live birth data over the past three years. The West South Central, Mountain, and Pacific states are showing increases in live births. New England and the South Atlantic states are decreasing while the Middle Atlantic, East North Central, West North Central, and East South Central States are fluctuating in the number of live births. Birth data will be reflected in school enrollment within the next five to six years.

NSBA Survey on Declining Enrollment

For this report thirty-six state school boards associations responded to an NSBA survey concerning declining enrollment (see Appendix II for a copy of the survey). The survey inquired as to a) the current impact of enrollment in the state, b) what the state association was doing to help local boards, c) what information and resource needs would be helpful at the state association and local board levels, and d) what state legislation would help local boards cope with enrollment decline. Despite the fact 26 of 36 responding associations reported some involvement in activities which address enrollment decline, there was limited overall involvement. For example, only 13 associations participated in legislative activities and only 16 reported using publications (journal articles and special reports) to disseminate information on declining enrollment.

There seemed to be some doubt as to the actual impact of enrollment changes in 13 of the responding associations. This pattern of non-response was fairly consistent. About 13 of the 36 states were unable to respond to most survey items. Twenty associations were unable to say how local districts were handling enrollment decline.

Extent of enrollment decline. Many state associations were uncertain about enrollment decline in their state. Twenty-seven states reported that there were some districts with enrollment decline. The range of reported decline varied greatly; however, many responses were vague, using estimates or general expressions rather than actual or percentage figures. Six states said that urban districts were most affected while seven states reported that the decline was more random among districts in their states. Five states indicated that enrollment seemed fairly stable and one indicated that there were some increases in student

population. Most states reported that the enrollment decline was limited and varied; only two or three states reported severe declines.

The means of coping with enrollment decline varied; however, the four most frequently reported effects of enrollment decline were 1) school closings, 2) reduction in force, 3) loss of state aid, and 4) program reductions or cutbacks.

The impact data from the survey must be treated carefully. Some of the printed material that accompanied survey responses seemed to indicate that enrollment decline was more serious than the survey response would indicate. In many cases, projected enrollment figures show that the decline will be more widespread in the next few years.

Needs. The predominant need expressed by state associations is for more information concerning demographic data and survey methods, legislation, curricula, and use of facilities/space. There seemed to be an indication that the states would like to see NSBA and the National Institute of Education act as clearinghouses to collect and disseminate such information to states. Cases of districts coping successfully with enrollment decline would be of particular help. A list of local districts and contact persons having success in dealing with declines is attached (see Appendix III). Nearly half the states, 17, did not know how the NSBA or NIE could be of assistance.

Legislation. Regarding current legislation which impedes school districts' ability to deal with declining enrollment, or, regarding needed legislation to help districts cope, 13 states either reported no knowledge of laws impeding local district ability or did not respond to the question. Ten state associations said that they were currently working on changes in the state aid formula and three indicated that they were working on legislation to facilitate reduction in force policies at the local level.

Other activities. Other activities that state associations would engage in if they had more useful information and data, included 1) disseminating information and demographic data, 2) holding training workshops for board members experiencing enrollment decline, and 3) acting as resource agencies to identify consultants who could help local boards. The suggestions made to NSBA and NIE are included in later sections of this report.

II. What Issues Bear on a School Board's Perspective?

School districts should be aware of several forces -- not just birth rate or number of pre-school children -- which influence school enrollment. In-migration and out-migration may render birthrates meaningless. New housing developments, increased taxes, changes in real estate value, new industries in adjacent communities, age of the community's population, and the like are matters which should be attended to in school district planning, but often are not.

In addition to the forces that cause change in enrollment, the perceptions of those involved will influence how enrollment change is treated. Whether citizens and educators regard enrollment change as a problem, a crisis, a myth, a temporary aberration, a welcome respite, or an opportunity for improvement will depend, in part, on the kinds of information available and used by the school district. Whether a board is aware of the community attitudes may also affect its planning.

If a district fails to plan on the basis of continuously updated information, or if a district uses a narrow data base (e.g. birth rate or national figures alone), it will likely be unprepared for change in enrollment.

There are patterns of social forces which can be perceived, and which should act as early warning signals. The proportion of the adult population which is of child-bearing age, for example, changes over time in some communities. An older, more stable community with a maturing adult population is likely to experience declining enrollment. If such a community is residential, fully developed, and has increasing real estate values, there are relatively few opportunities for families with young children to move in. Davis and Lewis (1976) observe that central cities and first-ring suburbs, many of which fit the above description, are experiencing the most severe enrollment declines, whereas cities of 50,000 people and their surrounding metropolitan areas may experience growth.

But complex demographic and sociological forces affect each school district in a unique way. Patterns are not to be relied upon. State and national data is therefore insufficient, even inapplicable. Yet neither school boards nor school administrators have customarily paid attention to the complex business of projections. State and national organizations can help.

Poor planning and management practices in local districts exacerbate problems associated with enrollment decline. When a district has changes in enrollment, all aspects of the educational operations are affected: teaching, program management, staffing, collective bargaining, inter-school and intra-district working relations, etc.

Inadequate planning, or planning based on inadequate pupil population projections, leaves a district unprepared to cope with aspects of enrollment decline which it has not anticipated. Obviously, the sophistication of the process, and the data, used in a district for planning and management havea strong impact on the advantages or disadvantages experienced due to enrollment decline.

One thing which state and national associations can do, therefore, is to press districts to engage in sophisticated planning generally and population projection specifically.

Several specific problems often occur to school districts, vis-a-vis planning and problem-solving, when faced with declining enrollments.

Demographic Information. There is generally a lack of useful population data at the local district level. Few sources are available that provide accurate and relevant data on birth rates, population mobility, live births, etc. Unfortunately, even district-wide data is inadequate for planning at the local level. Districts need to explore opportunities for sharing data collection with other social agencies and planning commissions, and with neighboring school districts.

Public Opinion. Public attitudes present paradoxes for school districts with declining enrollment. Taxpayers are reluctant to support increased levies and referenda when actual numbers of students are decreasing. Support for new programs, the public is likely to say, should be obtained from money saved because of enrollment decline. However, savings are rare and slow to accrue. Generally, the public is not aware of inflationary forces that can push costs higher even if programs are cut back.

- Idle threats from earlier years reduce the credibility of boards and administrators who respond to declining enrollment with plans to cut programs and services.

- Enrollment decline has the unfortunate effect of reducing also the number of parents with children in school, a group often counted upon to support tax and bond referenda issues.
- Closing buildings, one likely response to declining enrollment, can have very diversive effects in a community. Parents and community members favor closing any school not in their neighborhood.

School Finance. Many state aid formulas are based on average daily attendance or membership; these cause a decrease in financial resources for districts with declining enrollment. Costs continue to increase in many areas due to inflation (including increases in personnel salaries and support costs), experimental or innovative programs, increased emphasis on individualized instruction, mainstreaming handicapped children, and the enforcement of civil rights guidelines, legislation and court decisions.

Cost Savings. Savings due to decreased enrollments are slow to occur and are offset by increased salaries, smaller teacher/pupil ratios, etc. According to the Illinois Office of Education, (1975) typically a three year period of decline is necessary for savings to result from closing classrooms and buildings or reducing staff. Moreover, decline is usually uneven within a district so that a reduction of 100 students will not necessarily mean that four or five teaching positions can be cut.

Reduction in Force. Reduction in teaching force presents several dilemmas for school districts experiencing declines in enrollment.

- While some districts must remove tenured teachers by seniority, they must also comply with affirmative action principles and guidelines for hiring underrepresented minorities and women.
- New, perhaps highly motivated teachers are among the first to go.
- Experienced part-time teachers are not covered by tenure provisions and are among the first to be dismissed. Many of these people have special skills and abilities.

Interdistrict Relations. Uneven population trends may cause adjoining districts to experience simultaneous enrollment declines and overcrowding; however, legal, jurisdictional, and attitudinal barriers may prevent sharing facilities or using available space. In large districts, one area of a district may even experience growth while others experienced decline.

Facility Use. Existing state law may limit/prevent leasing or sharing public school facilities with non-public and/or profit making concerns. Expanding opportunities for adult education programs in available space rarely includes increased state or federal funds to provide such programs.

Certain opportunities can also grow from declining enrollment. In addition to the increased motivation to use planning and management tools, the following opportunities may be found in districts with enrollment decline.

a. There is motivation to increase citizen participation in public school decisions. The saliency of the declining enrollment issue provides school districts with an opportunity to increase public awareness of other educational concerns and issues. Underused public information tools can be put into use, e.g., town hall meetings, low cost surveys, news releases, etc.

b. School districts are encouraged to share information such as planning data, policies, strategies, etc. Consolidation of school districts or sharing programs among districts is encouraged.

c. The current teacher surplus creates an increased pool of trained personnel who can be used as teacher aides for individualized instruction programs.

d. Space is often available to try innovative or experimental programs.

e. Facilities can be shared with other social service agencies (decreasing the costs of providing multiple programs with decreasing budgets). Increasing the use of school facilities for non-school programs also increases the awareness of education's value beyond the immediate client group (students and parents).

f. Costs can be saved by reducing administrative and maintenance personnel.

In short, the events associated with declining or changing enrollment may be exploited for beneficial purposes. A district, in order to benefit, must be able to make use of planning, communication, management, collaboration, and data gathering techniques and skills. The experience of the Oak Park, Michigan, schools provides some evidence of benefits derived from creative management and planning while experiencing enrollment decline.

Oak Park, Michigan - A Case of Enrollment Decline*

Oak Park has experienced a severe decrease in enrollment in the past decade. Student population in the district peaked at 8,000 in 1965 and fell to a low of 4,200 in the 1975-6 school year. The following report indicates several procedures used to plan for and cope with declining enrollment at the local level.

Issues. The most important issues that surfaced during the enrollment decline were (a) program quality, (b) instructional improvement/staff development, (c) reduction in teaching force, (d) program planning and budgeting, (e) facility use, and (f) community public relations. Enrollment decline was one dimension of a set of administrative and policy making problems related to the need to set objectives, plan, identify needed personnel, develop a philosophy, and communicate messages to relevant audiences.

The Oak Park schools used the declining enrollment phenomenon to motivate board members, faculty/staff, and community to focus on the improvement of the school system.

Program budgeting, that is, itemizing the cost of each program (e.g., teaching of reading, algebra instruction) allowed the district to plan at the local school level and to support priority programs and needs when making budget cuts. This planning tool also allowed for:

- Meaningful debate among interested parties (e.g., community, board, teachers, etc.);
- The collection of up-to-date data on populations (through telephone surveys);
- More public awareness because the board was forced to publicize continuously their positions and priorities.

*This case report was presented to Conference participants by Samuel Sniderman, Superintendent of the Oak Park, Michigan Schools. Although Oak Park is one of the more affluent districts in the state, several valuable lessons are provided for districts experiencing or expecting decline.

Facility Use. After experiencing a major problem with closing a building, the board made it a policy not to close additional buildings. Instead, through a conversion to unit heating, parts of different schools could be closed. Each community was involved in the planning for school use, and central office personnel were used to cover principalships when vacancies occurred. This reduced central management costs and helped local schools plan and budget. The suggestion to use one principal to cover more than one building was rejected. In addition, a district-wide citizens' advisory committee was formed to address facility use and other long-range issues for the district.

Population Planning. Several problems were encountered in projecting populations. First, a suburban district has difficulties in relying on live birth data because families move for unexpected reasons, such as changes in tax and/or mortgage rates. Although telephone surveys are helpful, they provide little reliable enrollment projection data beyond one or two years.

Program and Staff Development. The Oak Park schools have a "personalized," non-graded elementary education program. High school courses are non-graded except for some math and sciences courses. Alternating (yearly) limited enrollment courses such as English electives or calculus allows the district to offer special subject area courses in a cost-effective manner. They also participate in a regional vocational education high school. Parents and teachers confer at least four times a year about student progress.

In order to improve these programs the Oak Park Schools have a staff development program. The program includes a teaching strategies center, in-service education, and cooperation with a nearby university. The collective bargaining contract provides for sharing the cost of released time for staff development between teachers and the district. When personnel are assigned new tasks or subjects they must gain additional training.

Reduction in Force. Goal/priority setting efforts have provided guidelines for making personnel reductions. Board policy and contract provisions with teachers have outlined the RIF procedures which include the following provisions:

- Certification is required for specific teaching areas.
- Reassigned teachers must have 6 credit hours in the new area or are not considered qualified to teach (in the contract).
- One librarian covers two buildings with a technician/clerk assigned for continuous operation at each school library.

- Only when teachers are both certified and qualified are cuts to be based on seniority.
- A middle school endorsement on certification (at local level) prevents bumping by teachers (released from other levels) with no experience or training in middle school teaching.
- The district provides a $10,000 retirement bonus for teachers retiring at age 55 (with 15 years in the district) with $1,000 less each year up to age 65.
- For younger teachers cut due to reductions, the district guarantees to use them at least 2/3 of each week at current salary (first-call substitutes) with an agreement to rehire them as attrition provides new positions.

Communications with the public is a crucial element in the Oak Park plan. Trained volunteers make telephone surveys (20th name on voter registration list) to get input for planning and goal/priority setting and to provide feedback on school operations and achievements.

Each home in the district receives a newsletter every six weeks.

In summary, improvement oriented, positive attitudes have allowed this school system to cope with declining enrollment through program budgeting; continuous reassessment of priorities, programs, and personnel use; retraining and developing staff; and communication with and input/feedback from citizens.

A State Education Agency Perspective*

State offices of education are frequently called upon to aid local school districts suffering from declining enrollment problems. This is a view from that vantage point.

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*This expression of state education agency perspective was presented to the Conference by Ivan Wagner, Director of the Division of Planning and Evaluation in the Indiana Department of Public Instruction.

Most local districts coping with enrollment decline can trace their most severe problems to poor planning/preparation associated with a lack of program budgeting and other necessary management practices. Other events also increase local problems, e.g., frozen tax levies, fixed costs regardless of student population, and failing bond issues and referenda.

To gain flexibility, local districts need to implement plans for reallocating funds in line with specified priorities. Instructional development programs, public relations efforts, evaluation systems to aid in determining staff reductions, and the following management practices are likely to help:

a. Consolidation of the use of administrative and support staff.

b. Reassignment of central office personnel to local schools through decentralized management by objectives.

c. Cost-effectiveness studies.

d. Continuous projection of enrollments through demographic data, e.g., live births, land use information (work with regional planning groups to get zoning, open land, development, etc. information), monthly population figures, etc.

e. Alternative building uses, through scheduling alternatives and moving jr. high or middle school children to elementary or high school facilities.

State legislation can also ease local problems associated with enrollment decline. State aid formulas could be adjusted to fund programs, not just bodies. Where aid is based on student enrollment or attendance, students could be weighted according to special program needs, e.g., physically handicapped students = 3.25, compensatory education students = 2.0, basic elementary grades = 1.0, etc. (NEFP, 1971). Special legislation could be introduced to ease the impact of sharp declines in district enrollment, e.g., grandfather clauses, limiting the percent of decrease in state aid funds for any single year, allowing districts to average or take the best of three years in computing average daily attendance/enrollment, etc.

Additionally state agencies could help local districts develop needs assessments, consolidate programs between school districts, and provide program budget accounting systems on a statewide basis. (These suggestions are elaborated later in this report.)

III. A Review of Issues and Suggestions

Conferees identified a variety of issues relating to declining enrollment in public schools. The issues fall into six categories: a) legal issues and legislative concerns, b) planning and management, c) facility use, d) use of human resources, e) public attitudes and public relations, and f) enrollment planning (demographic issues).

Legal Issues and Legislative Concerns. State aid formulas are one of the most significant legislative areas with declining enrollment implications. In the post-Serrano era of school finance, states have assumed a larger share of funding public elementary and secondary education. School districts experiencing declining enrollment often must deal with significant cuts in state aid which is primarily tied to student enrollment (whether average daily attendance or membership). Additionally, weighted formulas for various types of students can have increased impact on districts losing students with higher weights, e.g., handicapped students, urban children with various weights associated with poverty, density of population, etc. Conferees and state associations identified several legislative changes which might facilitate coping with declining enrollment:

- Allow local districts to use a three year average when reporting ADA or ADM for reimbursement via the school aid formula (or the highest ADA or ADM of the three years).
- Introduce grandfather clauses so that no district would receive less than they received the previous year or no less than 90% of the previous year.
- Allow the district to use the best six months of ADA or ADM over a two year period.
- Offer special assistance to school districts suffering more than a 2% decline in any single year.
- Base state aid on program needs rather than ADA or ADM.
- Provide state reimbursement for community and adult education programs (e.g., movement toward universal free public education in cooperation with federal lifelong learning programs).

- Lift other school district costs which become especially burdensome when there is enrollment decline:
  - Provide special assistance to school districts with good faith plans for desegregation, affirmative action, and mainstreaming and encourage increased federal support for aid to such school districts.
  - Provide special grants for school districts to develop facilities in compliance with Title IX (PL 93-380) provisions demanding equal facilities for both sexes.
  - Encourage intergovernmental agencies at the state and federal level to devise legislation that will allow for cooperative funding of programs.

Statutes dealing with employment, e.g., hiring, reduction in force, and employee relations, are also at issue when coping with declining enrollment. Local reduction in force (RIF) policies are often restricted by law. Seniority provisions, for example, may place school districts in a serious dilemma. If reduction in force is based on state statutory seniority provisions, a district may be forced to violate federal laws or guidelines associated with civil rights provisions covering affirmative action in employment. Under seniority rules, recently hired women and minorities may be the first to be dismissed. Persons recently hired for mandated programs, e.g., bi-lingual education, special education for the handicapped, and mainstreaming, have some protection because of their specific qualifications; however, other programs will suffer decreases in funding when resources are mandated for these new programs. Tenure provisions also limit a school district's RIF policy. Untenured teachers are typically in their first three years of teaching and are among the first to be dismissed. Limits on class size or teacher/pupil ratios also decrease a district's staffing flexibility.

Staff development legislation might provide state or federal funds to help school districts reallocate staff in times of enrollment decline. Support is needed for retraining teachers in low attendance areas so they can perform in new assignments, whether in special programs designed for improvement, or in areas still experiencing enrollment increases. Management training funds would also aid local school administrators to cope with tight budgets and the need to reallocate resources.

Mobility incentives could be provided so that teachers would be encouraged to move to school systems in need of personnel. For example, legislation could allow for transfer of benefits, transfer of seniority, or bonuses to school districts which hire experienced teachers. State and federal legislation could work cooperatively in this area to address uneven population trends across state lines.

The fluctuating nature of enrollment trends indicates that the sale of buildings would be unwise, but abandoned (mothballed) buildings are generally undesirable to community residents. Therefore, sharing or temporarily leasing facilities to other organizations should be encouraged. Available space opens options for school systems to work with social service agencies in order to provide public service programs and adult continuing education. School districts can also lease or share space with voluntary, private profit and non-profit concerns.

The use of facilities is often limited by state statutes constraining districts from leasing, selling, or sharing school buildings. Local and state construction codes may also limit local flexibility. Federal tax incentives for the private leasing of unused school facilities have been suggested. Tax credits for the conversion of school buildings for alternative uses would help.

Laws dealing with housing might be reviewed. State or federal school system planning would improve if laws about development of housing, land use, and rehabilitation of existing housing required enrollment impact statements. Schools would benefit if local and regional planning/development commissions and boards included representatives from education agencies.

State and federal legislation might be encouraged to develop local boards for cooperative public services. These local agencies should include school representatives and encourage programs for sharing facilities, programs, personnel, etc. Funds for public libraries, Title XX (the Social Security Act program for social services including day care) programs, Community Education (PL93-380) programs, adult education, and Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) programs, are examples of existing legislation which could fund programs in available space and in cooperation with existing school programs. Teachers no longer needed for elementary schools could be retrained to work in some of these programs.

Planning and Management Issues. As noted before, declining enrollment provides an added incentive to use sound management and planning practices in school districts. General planning and management tools should be used to set goals, establish priorities, develop program alternatives, establish a program plan and attached budget, and provide for the evaluation of program implementation, achievement outcomes, personnel performance, and so on. Communications patterns should be established among all relevant community and employee groups. Relevant power groups should have input into the planning and decision-making process, e.g., teachers, administrators, board members, and local community groups.

Where current planning and management skills do not exist, school districts need to provide for training and development.

Facility Use. The leasing, selling, sharing or other use of available space should be based on the program plans and improvement needs of a school district. Older buildings may need to be sold. Some facilities may be shared on a priority basis with public service agencies that could enhance the school program (e.g., library, recreational, health, and so on). Commercial use should be based on the ability to reconvert the building to school use if needed, or offered to enterprises which would not impair school programs when sharing facilities, or to organizations in a position to provide service to the school. The variety of agencies, organizations, and/or businesses which could lease or share facilities should be determined through cooperative efforts with local governments and planning organizations.

Available space need not mean only that a school district must find other organizations to use the space. Clearly, previously overcrowded schools will be in a position to use the space to eliminate double sessions, portable classrooms, outmoded or unsafe buildings, etc. Programs for individualized learning or counseling can be expanded. Community-school operations can be explored

and adult/continuing education programs implemented. One school district, for example, opened classes to adults when enrollment declines provided available room. In addition to providing a service to highly motivated adult learners, one spin-off was a near zero rate of school violence and vandalism. Available facilities can also be used to provide room for female athletic and recreational programs. It should be noted that savings associated with building closings result primarily in human rather than maintenance costs (e.g. administrative and custodial). Such savings should be assessed in light of the impact of closing the school.

The Use of Human Resources. A school district must concern itself with a variety of effects when experiencing declining enrollment. Plans and policies for reduction in force and reallocation of personnel need to consider not only program priorities and personal qualifications, but also the resulting educational impact. Teachers may resist moving to a different school after investing personal effort in building their skills to meet the educational needs of a particular school community (Eisenberger, 1974). A district may need to provide orientation and training programs for personnel changing schools, subject areas, or programs. Efforts to relocate, rehire, or retrain personnel dismissed under reduction-in-force action will enhance employee relations.

A plan for employment evaluation should be developed if grounds for reduction are to go beyond seniority and tenure guidelines. Qualifications for teaching various age levels and for different programs need to be established. A failure to address these issues could culminate in elementary school teachers replacing skilled teachers in special programs or upper grades.

Provisions for the retention of recently hired women and minority group employees must be considered. Districts working under government guidelines and/or court orders need to clarify positions regarding dismissal of employees hired under affirmative action programs approved by the federal government.

Public Attitudes and Public Relations

Public information programs designed to increase the general awareness of current and projected enrollment are critical for school districts. If school buildings need to be closed, the community should be involved in information sharing and planning activities. If the community has participated in establishing goals and priorities for a school district, decisions regarding facility use will be more informed and enjoy increased support. A school district would be well advised to consider the following suggestions:

- Make public communications early and continuously.
- Involve community leaders and information gatekeepers in planning groups.
- Use community volunteers, trained by the school district staff, to obtain local school enrollment data through low cost surveys.
- Highlight the benefits of declining enrollment for districts no longer having to cope with population growth.
- Use the mass media, as well as newsletters, public speeches, etc. to reach taxpaying publics. Remember that parents and students are not the only publics involved.
- Explore cases of other school districts successfully experiencing enrollment decline.
- Explore community attitudes and feelings about school ownership when assessing facility closings.
- Hold town meetings at the school and district level in order to increase the awareness of issues associated with enrollment decline and community attitude.
- Identify social, economic, and political forces that will be felt during both planning and action. Develop plans for working with the effects of these community forces.
- Include community groups when working to influence legislation and other public policy decisions.
- Consider cooperative plans with local business and industry to provide educational programs.
- Close schools as a last resort because the negative effects on personnel, residents, and clients may be greater than the benefits from financial savings.

Enrollment Planning. National data about school age population are useful for developing national policy, increasing awareness of regional and state trends, and projecting overall patterns of enrollment. However, as noted before, local enrollment planning must be based on local and area demographic forces. Some of these factors which should be reviewed in making local enrollment projections are:

- Birth rates and trends in the local area.
- Migration patterns for the district, surrounding community, and state.
- Undeveloped land in the local school attendance area.
- Available birth data at the state and local level.
- Plans or events in the local economy or in local politics which could impact on migration in or out of community (e.g., tax and mortgage rates, employment opportunities, desegregation plans, etc.).
- Age/maturity of the adult population and the approximate number of women of child bearing age.
- Retention rates for children already attending school.
- Location of business and industry and development plans for the district and surrounding area.
- Planning information from regional planning boards and commissions.
- Census Bureau information broken down to school district levels by the United States Office of Education (when available).
- Census tract information on a monthly basis.

Not all of the above information will be easily available, and the cost of collecting such data in some communities will exceed any enrollment planning benefits. They are presented here as possible sources of information for local school districts. School district surveys can be helpful in collecting data about the next one to three years. Telephone surveys using voter registration lists, local school volunteers conducting door to door surveys, and county birth records are among some of the tools that can be used to collect enrollment planning information. Presently, it is difficult to count on local data for enrollment projections beyond three to five years. For fairly

stable communities, five year enrollment projections can be based on real births. Beyond that period births are only estimated. Migration patterns and in-residence, pre-school children information must be continuously updated to determine if there are shifts in projecting population patterns.

In addition to new members of the school community, enrollment projections must also consider enrollment retentions. The survival of each age cohort in a school or school district may be erratic; data on cohort survival/retention rates are helpful in planning programs.*

School districts need to assess current skills and procedures for making enrollment projections. When necessary, training for administrators and/or board members should be provided to enhance data interpretation and planning.

Declining enrollment may be a temporary phenomenon in local areas with fluctuating student populations. Program planning should consider patterns of enrollment for students entering and presently within the district. Many districts experience enrollment shifts among schools within a district or between neighboring districts. Shifting enrollment patterns indicate that the planning efforts must consider each local school as well as the district level.

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*For further information see the NSBA Research Report, 1976-1 Declining Enrollment (pp. 12 - 17). This report provides useful suggestions for making enrollment change estimates.

IV. Suggestions to School Boards Associations

The following suggestions from conferees are directed to state school boards associations and NSBA in order to provide guidance as to how they may assist school districts coping with enrollment decline. Although no state association will embark on all of the service/action suggestions, they are given as alternatives from which to choose.

Suggestions to State School Board Associations

State school board associations are in a position to aid local districts directly in a number of ways. They also can coordinate services and information provided by other state, regional and national government agencies, and/or education organizations. The following suggestions deal with five service areas: state legislation, public awareness, training efforts, informational services, and direct help for local school districts.

Action concerning state legislative changes might include:

- Coordinating a legislative team to review and suggest revisions in state legislation in order to provide school districts with maximum flexibility when dealing with enrollment decline; for example:
  - Seeking legislation that would allow seniority and dismissal procedures to be determined at the local level. This would increase the flexibility in establishing reduction in force policies for school districts.
  - Seeking legislation dealing with school facility use that would increase the alternatives available to local boards.
  - Seeking legislation which will encourage and support inter-district planning and program/resource sharing. Specifically, allow districts to use available space outside of their borders while not threatening current authority to make program decisions.
- Seeking revisions in the state school aid formula to ease the impact of reduced aid when student enrollment declines. This might include "hold-harmless" clauses, averaging

ADA or ADM over three years, or special funds for districts with severe declines. Otherwise, districts will lose aid immediately while costs continue to rise.

- Publish suggestions for dealing with declining enrollment under existing law. In short, help local boards understand their prerogatives and constraints when making staffing, facility use, budget allocation, and other policy and planning decisions.
- Seeking to reduce the number of curriculum mandates in order that local reallocation of resources can be done more flexibly.

Actions to increase public awareness of declining enrollment phenomena might include:

- Through news releases and press conferences, using the mass media to increase public awareness throughout the state.
- Issuing statements and reports on the possible impact of declining enrollment at the local and state level. Specifically, explaining why decreases in student population are not necessarily equated with reduced budgets.
- Inviting legislators and other public figures to participate in state conferences on declining enrollment and publicizing the event. This will put state policy makers on record with regard to their understanding of the enrollment issues.
- Providing for declining enrollment sessions and panel discussions at regional and state school board conventions and meetings.

Actions to provide training for boards and administrators might include:

- Conducting training workshops in coordination with other education associations to develop skills in the following areas:

  a. Goal setting, priority program planning and budgeting.

  b. Managing a district experiencing declining enrollment.

  c. Conducting enrollment projection studies at the local level.

  d. Staffing and the use of facilities.

- Conducting training sessions for board members on developing policies for:

    a. Reduction in force.

    b. Collective bargaining provisions for coping with declining enrollment.

    c. Facility use.

    d. Reallocation of financial support.

    e. Budget approval based on priority goals.

Informational services which associations might provide include:

- Publishing articles on policies, statutes, cases, and other factors emanating from declining enrollment effects.
- Coordinating the development of information sharing networks among member districts experiencing declining enrollment. Share methods of coping, major problems encountered, policies, strategies, and so on.
- Helping collect and disseminate demographic data at the state, and where possible, local levels.
- Seeking and disseminating information to affected districts concerning economic and land development within the state and regions of the state in cooperation with state government and regional planning boards and commissions.
- Providing information on consultants with expertise in coping with enrollment decline; act as a human resource clearinghouse for local districts.
- Developing an inventory of case reports and studies on declining enrollment experience at the local level.
- Developing a handbook for districts giving information on planning, projecting enrollment, demographic information sources, legal resources and barriers, consultants, services offered by the state association, etc.

Direct services to local districts might include:

- Either alone or in cooperation with other education organizations and/or state education agencies, establishing "crisis assistance teams" to help districts with severe declining enrollment problems.

- Working with local board collective bargaining agents to develop strategies and demands concerning employment practices, e.g., dismissal/RIF, seniority, qualifications, early retirement, class size, and other provisions.
- Providing an enrollment projection service for districts.

It should be noted that many of the above suggestions for state board associations could be accomplished in cooperation with other state education organizations, NSBA, state education agencies, the governor's office, etc. Collaborative work with these groups will increase the information sources and the coverage of service to local school districts.

Suggestions to the National School Boards Association

The following items are suggested courses of action which the National School Boards Association could take either alone or in cooperation with state associations, other national education organizations, and federal agencies. The National Institute of Education (NIE), the United States Office of Education (USOE), the Census Bureau and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) are government agencies which have information or programs which could help with declining enrollment problems.

NSBA could use experts in declining enrollment, demographics, policy making and planning for one or more of the following purposes:

- Organizing a symposium of experts to study declining enrollment, define the issues, and disseminate alternative courses of action that could be taken at the state and local levels (e.g., legislative changes, information services, if-then contingency plans for local boards, and so on).
- Using such experts on the NSBA Convention program to deliver talks, sit on panels, or lead discussions on declining enrollment.
- Developing an inventory of consultants with skills to help local school districts cope with declining enrollment (a national human resource clearinghouse). This inventory could also be used by state associations to identify speakers and panel members for state school board association meetings.

NSBA could help increase the national awareness of declining enrollment issues through one or more of the following actions:

- Including (press invited) sessions at the NSBA Convention or articles in the American School Board Journal dealing with declining enrollment.
- Through public statements, news releases, and press conferences, issuing statements concerning local, state, and national trends in student population and consequences of enrollment decline at the local level.
- Working with the television networks or public television to produce a program on changing school enrollment.
- Working closely with state associations to coordinate their publicity efforts (including training sessions on how to work with the press to increase public awareness of education phenomena).

Informational services of the NSBA (in addition to the above) might be used to:

- Develop a declining enrollment case study information service.
- Develop scenarios for different types of school districts (large/small districts, large cities, first ring suburbs, second ring independent medium and small cities, small/rural communities, etc.):

    a. Alternative courses of action.

    b. Typical effects.

    c. Alternative policies adopted (disseminated through the policy service).

- Work with NIE to develop computer simulations of districts with enrollment decline.
- Develop a handbook or guide for local enrollment projecting/planning.
- Hold regional conferences on declining enrollment.
- Help state associations and local districts set up state and regional information sharing networks on declining enrollment issues, alternatives, planning, etc.
- Work with federal agencies (NCES, NIE, USOE, and the Bureau of the Census) to develop a data clearinghouse on population trends and migration patterns. This would provide information on:

a. Demographic data broken down by school districts.

b. Birth data and birth rate trends.

c. In and out migration patterns (state, region, local, etc.).

d. Research on long range planning and development efforts.

Training services could be provided by NSBA in one or more of the following ways:

- Training workshops on declining enrollment could be offered through the School Board Academy and/or in cooperation with state associations. Training would be for both board members and school administrators (separately in part, together in part) regarding planning, policy development, management, etc. NSBA might also consider joint workshops in cooperation with the American Association of School Administrators. School districts experiencing or expecting to experience enrollment decline could benefit from increased knowledge concerning:

  a. Planning strategies.

  b. Management tools (budgeting, program priority building, program implementation, etc.).

  c. Public information/relations and citizen involvement strategies.

  d. Staffing arrangements (e.g. reduction in force, reallocation of personnel, collective bargaining agreements, and so on).

  e. Use of facilities.

- For large urban districts experiencing declining enrollment, a policy, planning, management workshop could be operated by NSBA's Council of Big City Boards of Education. The purpose of the workshop would be to share knowledge and unique strategies for dealing with declining enrollment in large cities.

NSBA efforts in the legislative arena might include:

- Drafting model state legislation relating to declining enrollment in such areas as: state aid formulas, reduction in force, facility use, regional cooperative planning, cooperative service agencies, interdistrict facility/personnel sharing, state collective bargaining statutes, program and budget accounting, civil rights compliance and desegregation (where appropriate at the state level), and special financial aid and services to declining enrollment districts.
- Working at the Federal level to gain support for:

  a. Community schools (to increase the options for available space).

  b. Tax incentives for private lease or purchase of school facilities.

  c. Staff development and management training.

  d. Collection and dissemination of demographic information useful at the local level (including support for NCES and USOE to increase the usefulness of data on school district population).

  e. Increased support for special programs (particularly those mandated by court decisions and federal guidelines).

  f. Consolidation of legislation and reduction of inflexible guidelines.

  g. Support for community services which can use available school space.

  h. Funds for providing personnel for federally or court mandated programs (e.g., affirmative action, mainstreaming, bilingual education).

  i. Increased research funds to study the impact of declining enrollment on program arrangements (e.g., class size/teacher-pupil ratios, closing buildings, reduction in force).

- Working with federal agencies to:

  a. Increase local flexibility in dealing with categorical programs.

  b. Reduce redundant reporting mandates and red tape provisions.

  c. Provide common forms for reporting enrollments.

  d. Provide guidelines for affirmative action requirements under reduction in force conditions.

V. Suggestions to the National Institute of Education

The focus of attention should be at the local school district or local school level. Aggregated population data, single national coping strategies, and broad generalizations provide few benefits to local school districts. Each district has a unique configuration of circumstances, social/political/economic forces, and population trends. Research, development, and dissemination activities of the National Institute of Education (NIE) can be very useful if they are directed at aiding local districts.

NIE is in a position to stimulate inquiries on the various phenomena associated with changes in school and school district enrollment. NIE could cooperate with NSBA, state education agencies, state school board associations, and other federal agencies to develop information and knowledge that will be useful for projecting enrollment, program planning and evaluating educational outcomes. Additionally, the research conducted by NIE and its funded agents may be helpful in clarifying the effects of actions taken as a result of or in preparation for enrollment change.

The following suggestions include recommendations concerning NIE's a) research agenda, b) development and local capacity for problem solving support, c) information dissemination and knowledge clarification efforts.

Research Agenda. The following research alternatives could provide useful knowledge for planning and policy decisions for school districts experiencing enrollment decline:

- Research on the effects of different student/teacher ratios, class sizes, and classroom arrangements as related to student achievement, faculty attitudes, and other process or outcome effects.
- Research on the relationship between school size and achievement, management capabilities, and program improvement.
- Research on the effects of changes in student enrollment for different school district types and from varying causes (e.g., birth rate vs. migration changes) including information on other variables associated with enrollment changes that have significant impact on educational production.

- Research on the effects of enrollment shifts within school districts (including transfer of students to different schools).
- Correlation studies relating declining enrollment with base line educational indicators (possible cooperative studies using National Assessment of Educational Progress data provided by NCES and the Education Commission of the States).
- The educational effects of tenure and seniority provisions.
- Effects of school transfer on teach performance.
- Cost/effectiveness studies on conducting educational programs in collaboration with other school districts and social service agencies.

It must be recognized that the effects of various forces, programs, and policies, can be viewed from a variety of perspectives. (1) Administrators are generally concerned with the ability to deliver an educational program; (2) client groups and many educational researchers are concerned with the effects on student learning; (3) various publics are concerned with the skills and abilities of students as they perform social roles while in school and after entering the world of work and society; (4) economists and policy makers are interested in the contributions graduates can make to the economic and social well being of the community, state and nation; and (5) employees of school systems are interested in the impact on conditions of work, continued employment opportunities, and personal feelings of achievement. Also, various public and private organizations are affected by the actions of school boards and administrators when they act and react to social phenomena such as decline in school enrollment. The National Institute of Education is in a position to lead in the sorting out of these overlapping and interrelated concerns, effects, and knowledge/information needs.

Development and Building Capacity for Local District Problem Solving. As noted before, many of the problems encountered by school districts experiencing enrollment decline are associated with inabilities to project and analyze enrollment and population data, plan and budget for educational programs, and solve problems. The Institute could provide several development/capacity building functions which will enhance local school capacity for problem solving. They are:

- Develop and disseminate techniques for collecting, analyzing, and applying local and regional demographic information, or assist state and federal agencies in preparing population, migration and other demographic information in locally useful formats.
- Develop training programs for local boards and administrators to increase the level of sophistication for planning and managing in school districts experiencing enrollment shift or decline.
- Develop legislative impact statements with regard to legislation affecting school district staffing, facility use, collective bargaining, and other legislation affecting district capacity to deal with enrollment change.

Information Articulation and Dissemination. The Institute, working in cooperation with NCES and the Bureau of the Census, can increase information on population trends for state and local education agencies and clarify causal factors of enrollment changes. In addition, working with NSBA and state associations, dissemination of demographic information can be improved. Information generated in the above research and development activities should be disseminated to school districts in clear and useful forms. Working to generate up-to-date and useful data at the local level will be helpful. It is, therefore, suggested that NIE play a coordinating role with NCES, the Bureau of the Census, and USOE so that common data collecting instruments and reporting efforts can reduce the information costs to districts and local government agencies.

Training. Although it is recognized that the Institute is not a training agency, research and development efforts should be designed so that technical assistance training can be conducted by government agencies, education organizations, universities, labs and centers, and other NIE contractors. The products of research and development efforts supported by the Institute should be adaptable for local planning, management, and policy decision-making purposes. NSBA, state associations and other cooperating educational organizations can develop training programs using the results of applied research and development.

Summary of Suggestions to NIE. The National Institute of Education is in a position to help expand the knowledge and information upon which planning and policy decisions can be made when school districts experience enrollment change. As a national organization with a strong dissemination mission, the Institute can play a critical role in increasing national awareness of issues and problems associated with enrollment change for elementary and secondary schools. The severity and scope of the declining enrollment phenomenon can be identified through the Institute's research and development efforts and by working in cooperation with national, state and local education organizations. Problems expressed in this report are similar to many concerns associated with education research and development, e.g., a lack of available information, a lack of usable knowledge concerning alternative courses of action, and a need to develop theories and models for testing and experimentation. In addition, the Institute is tied to a number of existing networks of individual educators, researchers/developers, policy makers, and publics. These relationships can be exploited to improve local practice relating to program planning, policy development, and operations while experiencing enrollment declines, shifts, and other population changes.

Conclusion

Declining enrollment is a local phenomenon that must be dealt with in unique ways by each school district experiencing declines. The issues raised, questions generated, perceptions expressed, and recommendations made are directed toward helping local school boards, administrators, and leaders deal with enrollment change. There is a great deal to learn concerning the extent to which enrollment decline is affecting school districts and the nature of those effects. The state school board associations, the National School Boards Association and the National Institute of Education have potential roles which can be exploited for the benefit of local policy makers and administrators.

This report should be viewed as part of a continuing dialogue on the phenomena associated with enrollment change in elementary and secondary school in the United States. National population data indicate that enrollment will begin to increase in the 1980s. Population trends in local districts, states and regions may fluctuate and enrollment within school districts may shift. These changing enrollment projections indicate that the issues surrounding school enrollment change will be major concerns for education for the forseeable future. There is need to keep the issue of declining enrollment alive among policy makers, administrators, education organization leaders, government agents, researchers and developers.

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APPENDIX I

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APPENDIX II

NSBA/NIE Survey on Declining Enrollment
To State School Boards Associations

Name of state_____Name of respondent_____

This survey has been developed in partial fulfillment of an NIE contract with NSBA. We plan to develop suggestions of action that NSBA, state school boards associations and NIE can take to facilitate handling the declining enrollment crisis. PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY BY JULY 23RD. The survey results will be reported to all state associations. Please give as complete an answer to each question as you can, add as many sheets to these as you want. Please send all pertinent documents with the completed survey. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Describe activities of your association which have addressed declining enrollment, such as informing or assisting local districts, advising state agencies or seeking legislative assistance. (Please send pertinent data, reports, workshop agendas, proposed legislation, etc.)

2. If you had the resources, what more do you think your state association should do to help local school districts deal with declining enrollment, if anything?

PLEASE CONTINUE TO PAGE 2

3. What more do you think NSBA should do to help state associations or local school districts deal with declining enrollment, if anything?

4. What kinds of data, training, etc., if any, are not now available in your state from any source, which, if available, would aid local districts as they deal with declining enrollment?

5. What kinds of data, training, etc., if any, does your association staff or leadership need to help local districts deal with declining enrollment?

6. What state and federal legislation currently impedes your state's school districts' ability to deal effectively with declining enrollment? What legislation, if any, should be pressed for?

PLEASE CONTINUE TO PAGE 3

7. Are you aware of any one school district in your state that has been particularly creative in dealing with declining enrollment? Please tell us about this district and what it has done. Who in this district could relate more about their experiences?

8. The National Institute of Education (NIE, a part of DHEW) has the potential to conduct or authorize studies, to create or contract for information services, to conduct or contract for training or publication, etc. Would you recommend that NIE help school boards associations or school districts deal with declining enrollment? If so, what would be your highest priority for NIE activity?

PLEASE CONTINUE TO PAGE 4

9. Please, if possible, provide information on the extent of declining enrollment in your state. How many districts affected? What sized districts affected? How much have their enrollments declined? (Please send any data or reports which you, your state board of education or anyone else has generated on the subject.)

10. Please comment on how declining enrollment has affected school districts in your state. Has the impact of declining enrollment included school closings, RIF, loss of state aid, expanded program offerings, consolidation, negotiation of job security measures with teachers, etc.? (Please send any data or reports which you, your state board of education or anyone else has generated on the subject.)

APPENDIX III

SCHOOL DISTRICTS IDENTIFIED BY STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATIONS AS HAVING DEALT SUCCESSFULLY WITH ENROLLMENT DECLINE*

1. Arkansas -
   Paul Fair
   Superintendent
   Little Rock School District

2. Florida -
   Mrs. Margaret Senne
   School Board Member
   Brevaro County Schools

3. Georgia -
   Joe Renfroe
   DeKalb County School System

4. Illinois -
   Donald Strong
   Superintendent
   Arlington Heights District
   No. 25

5. Indiana -
   Dr. Ronald Walton
   Monroe County Schools
   315 North Drive
   Bloomington, Indiana 47401

6. Massachusetts -
   Newton Randolph
   Wayland School Systems

7. Minnesota -
   Dr. Jack Greenwalt
   Superintendent
   Hopkins School District

   Dr. Fred Atkinson
   Bloomington School District

   Dr. David Wettergren
   Fairmont District

8. New Jersey -
   Irma Leeds
   Board Member
   Paramus, New Jersey

   John Powers
   Board Member
   Union City, New Jersey

9. New York -
   Dr. John J. Murphy
   ESC Planning Field
   Service Division
   N.Y. State Education
   Dept.
   Room 860, Education
   Building Annex

10. Ohio -
    Henry P. Kurdziel
    Superintendent
    Canton School District
    618 High Avenue, NW
    Canton, Ohio 44703

11. Utah -
    Dr. Donald Thomas
    Superintendent
    Salt Lake City

12. Virginia -
    Dr. John S. Davis
    Superintendent
    Fairfax County

13. Wisconsin -
    Dr. Douglas Ritchie
    Superintendent
    545 W. Dayton Street
    Madison, Wisconsin 53703

    Donald Siegfried
    Business Manager
    Elmbrooks Schools
    16945 W. North Avenue
    Brookfield, Wisconsin
    53005

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*Response to survey question number 7 see Appendix II.